

Downtown Walking Tour

Halls of Power: Government Centers and Corporate Plazas

Welcome to downtown Seattle, the city's art museum without walls. Since the early 1970s, government and private building owners have both participated in the tradition of commissioning and placing art in public spaces.

Beginning with the creation of the landmark percent-for-art legislation, public art began appearing in plazas, on hatch covers and

tree grates and displayed in the lobbies and public buildings. Walking from one end of downtown to the other, a visitor can enjoy more than 200 diverse artworks. They range from art incorporated into the design of Metro's bus tunnel, to *Hammering Man* in the plaza of the Seattle Art Museum, to a spectacular collection of glass art in the City Center Building. There are attention-grabbing works by artists of international

renown and artworks serving far more humble functions—artist-designed benches, security fences and building elements.

We hope that as you explore Seattle you will take this art guide with you. We in Seattle are proud of our public art and hope you will also enjoy it.

Length:
3.5 miles

Difficulty:
3, moderate



Seattle Arts
Commission

Halls of Power

Government Centers and Corporate Plazas

This stroll explores the multiple government and corporate public art collections in Seattle including the City Municipal Building, the King County Court House and the Washington State Convention and Trade Center. This 3.5 mile walk includes a few blocks of elevation change.

At the Pioneer Square Metro bus tunnel entrance, note the above ground gates:

- 1 Garth Edwards**, untitled, 1990, painted steel.

Cross 3rd Avenue to King County Park, and continue to 4th Avenue. In the King County Administration Building 4th Avenue lobby:

- 2 Robert Sperry**, untitled mural, 1985, ceramic.

Go around the building to the 5th Avenue exterior plaza:

- 3 George Tsutakawa**, *Sandworm*, 1985, steel.

Across the street is the King County Jail. On the North Plaza:

- 4 Martha Schwartz**, *Jail House Garden*, 1987, plaza design and tile.

Walk down James Street to 4th Avenue. Turn right onto 4th to the Public Safety Building plaza:

- 5 Robert Irwin**, *Nine Spaces, Nine Trees*, 1983, plum trees and blue mesh fencing.

Continue north on 4th Avenue to 1001 4th Avenue Plaza. In the lobby:

- 6 Sam Francis**, untitled, 1979, acrylic on canvas.

On the 4th Avenue plaza between Madison and Spring Street:

- 7 Henry Moore**, *Vertebrae*, 1968, bronze.

Continue up 4th Avenue to Union. Turn right on Union and walk up two blocks. The City Centre building is on the north side of the street. Enter the lobby on 6th and Union to see the corporate collection of contemporary glass works:

- 8** Various artists, glass sculpture.

Exit City Centre on Union and walk past 7th Avenue. Climb the stairs to the Washington State Convention and Trade Center. In the exterior courtyard:

- 9 Lewis "Buster" Simpson**, *Seattle George*, 1989, aluminum, ivy, concrete.

Enter the building at this level to find the International Meeting Place:

- 10 Jackie Ferrara**, *Meeting Place*, 1989, slate, concrete, steel, ivy.

- 11 Jenny Holzer**, *Selections from the Truism, Living, and Survival Series*, 1989, electronic message boards.

Continue through interior level 2 towards Pike Street:

- 12 David Mahler**, *Washington State Centennial Bell Garden*, 1989, 39 bells, sound.

Walk down to the street level of the Convention Center to find the Visitors' Information Kiosk. In the atrium along 7th Avenue:

- 13 Ann Gardner**, *Lebeg*, 2001. Suspended sculpture with glass tiles.

Exit to Pike Street at 8th Avenue and pass the Museum of History and Industry. Walk one block over to Pine Street, and head down Pine to enter Westlake Park:

- 14 Robert Maki**, *Westlake StarAxis/Seven Hills*, 1988, plaza design and waterfall.

Walk down Pike to 3rd Avenue. Continue south to University Street to the east side of Benaroya Hall. From north to south, interior works include:

- 15 Dale Chihuly**, *Crystal Cascade*, 1998, two glass chandeliers.

Anna Valentina Murch, *Skytones*, 1998, scrim and lights.

Robert Rausehenberg, *Echo*, 1998, painting

On the Exterior plaza:

- 16 Mark diSuvero**, *Schubert Sonata*, 1992, painted steel.

Continue down 3rd Avenue to Madison:

- 17 Tom Wesselman**, *Seattle Tulip*, 1989, painted steel.

End the tour on 3rd and Cherry. Note the motif on the Arctic Building.

- 18 A. Warren Gould**, terra cotta walrus heads, 1917. The heads are a precursor to Seattle's active public art scene.